

## **Preliminary Amendment**

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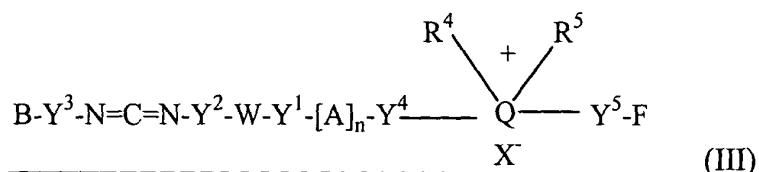
The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### **Listing of Claims:**

Please cancel Claims 1-10.

Claims 1-10 (Cancelled).

Claim 11 (Currently Amended) A method for detecting a nucleic acid by hybridization utilizing a nucleic acid labeled with a labeling substance, wherein the labeling substance is a fluorescent group-containing carbodiimide compound having at least one group selected from a carboxyl group, a sulfo group, a phosphono group and a phospho group which have substitution of an alkali metal, an alkaline earth metal or a basic group containing a nitrogen or phosphorus atom, which is represented by the following general formula (III):



wherein,

X represents a halogen atom or a sulfonic acid group;

A represents a functional group selected from the group consisting of -CH<sub>2</sub>-, -NHCO-, -CONH-, -O-, -S-, -NR<sup>1</sup>- wherein R<sup>1</sup> represents a linear, cyclic or branched saturated or unsaturated aliphatic hydrocarbon group having 1-20 carbon atoms, -NR<sup>2</sup>R<sup>3</sup>- wherein R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup> each independently represent a hydrogen atom, a linear or branched saturated or unsaturated aliphatic hydrocarbon group having 1-20 carbon atoms, or a cycloalkyl group, an aryl group or an aralkyl group which may have a substituent, provided that when one of R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup> is a hydrogen atom, the other represents a linear or branched saturated or unsaturated aliphatic hydrocarbon group having 1-20 carbon atoms, or a cycloalkyl group, an aryl group or an aralkyl group which may have a substituent, or R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup> may be bonded to each other to form as a whole a

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nitrogen-containing heterocyclic group which may contain an oxygen atom, -COO-, -OCO-, -NHSO<sub>2</sub>-, -NHC(S)NH- and SO<sub>2</sub>NH-;

n represents 0 or 1;

W represents a direct bond or a quaternary onium group;

Y<sup>1</sup>, Y<sup>2</sup>, Y<sup>3</sup> and Y<sup>4</sup> each represent a functional group represented by the general formula (II):



wherein, L represents a functional group selected from the group consisting of -CH<sub>2</sub>-, -NHCO-, -CONH-, -O-, -S-, -NR<sup>1</sup>-; p and q each represent an integer of from 0 to 20; and r represents the integers 0 or 1;

B represents a hydrogen atom or a monovalent organic group being the same as or different from -W-Y<sup>1</sup>-[A]<sub>n</sub>-Y<sup>4</sup>; and

F represents a fluorescent group;

Q represents either a tertiary or quaternary nitrogen atom, or a tertiary or quaternary phosphorus atom;

R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup> each independently represent a hydrogen atom, a linear or branched saturated or unsaturated aliphatic hydrocarbon group having 1-20 carbon atoms, or a cycloalkyl group, an aryl group or an aralkyl group which may contain a substituent, provided that when one of R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup> is a hydrogen atom, the other represents a linear or branched saturated or unsaturated aliphatic hydrocarbon group having 1-20 carbon atoms, or a cycloalkyl group, an aryl group or an aralkyl group which may contain a substituent, or R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup> may be bonded to each other to form a nitrogen-containing heterocyclic group or a phosphorus-containing heterocyclic group, which may contain an oxygen atom, as Q<sup>+</sup>R<sup>4</sup>R<sup>5</sup>-;

Y<sup>5</sup> has the same meaning as defined for Y<sup>1</sup>, Y<sup>2</sup>, Y<sup>3</sup> and Y<sup>4</sup>; and

at least one functional group selected from B, Y<sup>1</sup>, Y<sup>2</sup>, Y<sup>3</sup>, Y<sup>4</sup>, Y<sup>5</sup>, A, W, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>5</sup> and F has at least one group selected from a carboxyl group, a sulfo group, a phosphono group and a phospho group which have substitution of an alkali metal, an alkaline earth metal or a basic group containing a nitrogen or phosphorous atom.

~~fluorescent group-containing carbodiimide compound as defined in Claim 2 is used as the labeling substance.~~

Claim 12. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the functional group of the fluorescent group-containing carbodiimide compound is selected from B, Y<sup>1</sup>, Y<sup>2</sup>, Y<sup>3</sup>, Y<sup>4</sup>, A, and W in the formula (III) and has at least one group selected from a carboxyl group, a sulfo group, a phosphono group, and a phospho group which have substitution of an alkali metal, an alkaline earth metal or a basic group containing a nitrogen or phosphorus atom.~~fluorescent group-containing carbodiimide compound as defined in Claim 4 is used as the labeling substance.~~

Claim 13. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the functional group of the fluorescent group-containing carbodiimide compound is selected from Y<sup>5</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>5</sup>, and F in the formula (III) and has at least one group selected from a carboxyl group, a sulfo group, a phosphono group and a phospho group which have substitution of an alkali metal, an alkaline earth metal, or a basic group containing a nitrogen or phosphorus atom.~~as defined in Claim 5 is used as the labeling substance.~~